

Introduction to the Philosophy of Human Person

**Quarter 1 – Module 10:
The Human Persons in their
Environment**

Lesson

10

**Showing that Care for the
Environment Contributes to
Health, Well-being and
Sustainable Development**



What is It

Our vision of the true, the good and the beautiful is essential in the way we relate with nature in terms of caring for the environment.

Spirit is presaged in Nature (Hegel, quoted from Miller, 2004). We can refer to Spirit as the source of blessings and good things that sustains our life such as the earth, sun, air, water, food, trees, plants, vegetables, gravity and so on and so forth.

"The spirit is never at rest but always engaged in ever progressive motion, in giving itself a new form" (Hegel, quoted from Kegan, 1982) and through the emergence of humanity that nature gains self-consciousness (britannica.com).

By recognizing the power of our self-consciousness, we can choose and decide to care for nature, in the way we take care of ourselves and our own home.

Integral Ecology

Integral ecology shows us the 4 dimensions of approaching the environment (Esbjorn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2011):

<p>The subjective experiences with the environment (e.g., physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The environment is our home;- The roots of our alienation from the natural world due to material consumption, technological addiction, and what have you;- The ecological self approaches believe that individuals possesses the capacity to expand their self-identity until they identify with the entire natural world.	<p>The actions and movements of humans (e.g., growth, digestion, flight, sleep):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Eco-friendly behaviors teach individuals about ecologically destructive and beneficial behaviors;- Eco-social action explores personal action that can effect global change;- Individual behaviors that result from or create experiences of being “one with nature” or that foster right relationships.
<p>The shared morals, meaning, and experience that exist between and across humans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How the natural world is symbolized as dwelling, or home;- Environmental ethics: valuing the individual lives of all beings and highlights their intrinsic value as individual members of the biotic community;- Faith: e.g., Christianity that celebrates creation; nature as the abode of Spirit.	<p>The functional interaction (e.g., food chains, competition) and influence (e.g., pollution, weather patterns) of humans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How urban traffic patterns contribute to climate change- Systems and complexity sciences study the parts, the interconnections, and the holistic nexus of relationships;- Organic gardening studies sustainable design in small-scale ecosystems that produce food for human consumption.

Sustainable Development (Esbjorn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2011)

- Sustainable development describes development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- As the name suggests, it encourages development that a particular place, and the planet, can sustain.

Every human person can be “one with nature.” It is possible to feel one with nature but not act as one with nature.

3 Ways to be One with Nature (Esbjorn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2011)

1. Egocentric - Nature is basically valuable only insofar as she provides what you want (e.g., provides good food, favorable weather, food and shelter, challenging bike trails).
2. Ethnocentric - Nature is important to our community's livelihood and must be protected.

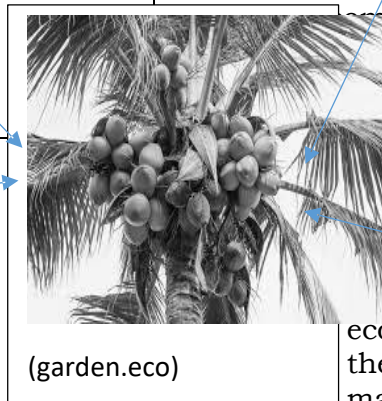
World-centric - Nature is valued by people for many reasons: aesthetic, emotional, spiritual, economic, and evolutionary. So we should work together to save them.

Example of an Integral Ecological Approach: Appreciating a Coconut Tree

Let us appreciate a coconut tree. There are four ways to do so: Feelings Connected to the Coconut Tree, Measurements of the Coconut Tree, Shared Meaning About the Coconut Tree, and The Functional Fit of the Coconut Tree.

The Coconut Tree

Feelings Connected to the Coconut Tree	Measurements of the Coconut Tree
When I looked at the coconut tree I feel sense of joy came over me. As I hugged the trunk I could feel the rough, bark scrape my skin. I felt at peace with the world in the arms of this great tree of life. I drank coconut water, it's satisfying.	The coconut tree is 30 feet tall. It has a lot of fruit. This tree is 10 years old and has survived many typhoons. This tree is composed of plant cells, molecules, strings, and atom vacuums.
Shared Meaning About the Coconut Tree	Functional Fit of the Coconut Tree
We have a large coconut tree at our backyard. The coconut has been held in reverence due to its awe-inspiring qualities as the tree of life. We, my wife and me, talked about how the coconut was a symbol of life.	The coconut tree is an essential part of the ecosystem. The coconut is the source of livelihood of many farmers in the country. It produces fresh water, lambanog, cooking oil, coconut meat for buko salad and many more.



(Adapted from Esbjorn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2011)

A person who is Eco-Integralist knows that (Esbjorn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2011):

- Given the problems of industrialization, ozone depletion, overpopulation, or resource depletion;
- The main problem is the lack of mutual understanding and mutual agreement based on a worldcentric moral perspective concerning the global commons;
- Very few people value Nature for its aesthetic, emotional, spiritual, economic, and evolutionary significance. These are the people who work together to save Nature (Wilber).

The Environment and Covid-19

Nature is our home, our dwelling place and our abode. Plants, animals and humans share the same space. We humans have to lead in caring for our environment.

The World Health Organization (WHO) tells us that infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, SARS and Ebola came from wildlife that got to humans.

The covid-19 reportedly came from animal in a live animal market (CDC-US).

It has been noted that the ecosystem's service of providing us with what we need has been interrupted by human activities like deforestation, agricultural activities that pollute the environment, unsafe consumption of wildlife and poor management of natural resources (WHO-Europe).